Fine imposed on service providers by TRAI

1892. SHRI DARA SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the amount imposed and collected as fine by Telecom Regulatory Authority (TRAI) from service providers for violation of TRAI's guidelines/regulations *etc*;

(b) if so, the details of fine imposed on each service provider; and

(c) the future plans of Government for awareness and capacity building of consumer in telecom sector indicating whether Government is also considering to fund consumer advocacy group registered with TRAI?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) and (b) No fine has been imposed and collected by TRAI from service providers for violation of TRAI's guidelines/regulations.

(c) There is no such plan in Department of Telecommunications at present.

Telephone connections in Jharkhand

1893. SHRI PARIMAL NATHWANI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the fact that only a little over 2 per cent of the people have landline telephone connections in Jharkhand;

(b) the steps Government proposes to take to remedy this situation by expanding landline telephone network in the State; and

(c) whether Government intends to launch any special programme in this regard in view of the fact that Jharkhand is a backward State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) The tele-density of landline telephones in Jharkhand is 1.39 per cent as on 31.10.2008.

(b) In Jharkhand, 482 wireline exchanges of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) are working with a capacity of 6.43 lakh lines which is adequate for providing new wireline connections. In addition, BSNL has proposed to open 12 new telephone exchanges with the capacity of 18,000 lines.

Under Universal Service Obligation Fund (SOF), agreements were signed with M/s BSNL in March 2005 for installation of Rural Household Direct Exchange Lines (RDELs) from 01.04.2005 to 31.03.2007 in the country including Jharkhand. These RDELs were to be installed in 66 Short Distance Charging Areas (SDCAs) in Jharkhand, where cost of providing telephone connection is more than the revenue earned. Subsequently, the cutoff date for installation of these RDELs was extended by two years to 31.03.2009. As on 31.10.2008, about 32,085 RDELs have been provided in the eligible SDCAs of Jharkhand with subsidy support from USO Fund under this scheme.